

## [Immigrant Career Paths and Social Structure] The Case of Spain<sup>1</sup>

*Abstract:* This article examines the possibilities for immigrants in Spain to converge with natives around certain key aspects of work: such as stability, salaries, career advancement. The concept of the work schedule becomes crucial to seeing the extent to which immigrants have made progress or not in the process of integration and mobility from their entry into the labor market until the time the study was completed, 2007. Possible answers to this question are constructed by differentiating various groups of immigrants by country of origin, that is according to structural or individual features, making it possible to understand why some tend to converge and others do not. The itinerary gives us a dynamic picture of the phenomena, and suggests the diversification of an artificial homogeneity of immigrant groups (also, of course, of the indigenous groups) to break down widespread stereotypes.

*Key words:* Immigrants, Work career, Integration, Job security, Wage differentials, Convergence.

### *The state of affairs*

Attention has been paid in specialised literature to studies on migrants' career paths, with special emphasis on the "discrepancy" between the occupation at origin and the one in the destination (Spillerman 1977), but career paths in the destination country have received less consideration. Existing research shows us that immigrants have worse work conditions and fewer chances to participate in upwardly-mobile work careers (Chiswick 2005, Toussand-Comeau 2006, Gagnon 2009); the ways of entering the labour market present an initial barrier in the development of career paths since immigrants often occupy certain niches. In recent years, some studies have tried to explain career paths and mobility based on interaction among different variables in a more complex way. Some authors (McAllister 1995, Coughan 1998, Piché 2002) suggest that there are five factors explaining career paths, in addition to the ethnic one: human capital, the level of studies and professional qualifications; knowledge of the language and cultural background; the time spent (seniority) on the labour market; work segregated by gender; and intergenerational mobility. However, it seems that none of these five factors are determinant alone.

The aim of this article is to assess two general hypotheses in the debate on immigrants' career paths. On one hand, the perspective of the "occupational assimilation of immigration" upholds the idea that the average earnings of immigrant and native workers converge over the long term, to the extent that the former acquire work experience and improve mobility between workplaces. This line of research has been widely documented (Becker 1983, Chiswick 2005) but its approach has been contested by the hypothesis linked to labour market segmentation theories (Piore 1983), which highlights how the inclusion of immigration in certain segments limits assimilation and convergence. These studies suggest a consolidation and even aggravation of pre-existing segmentation

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patterns. Other studies (Brücker 2009, Zimmermann 2009) note how immigrant workers tend to occupy the lowest positions in the labour market, with lower pay, regardless of their qualifications. Nevertheless, it must be borne in mind that this conclusion is conditioned to a certain extent by the adoption of static approaches to the reality of immigration at a given moment, without considering its evolution over a certain period. Immigrants' lower rate of occupational promotion is linked to the fact that they initially enter the labour market occupying the lower occupational categories, as labour market segments characterised by a predominance of jobs with low qualifications are the ones with the most job vacancies.

The subject of immigrants' occupational mobility has been studied in Spain as well as in other southern European countries (Reher *et alii* 2008, Cachón 2009, Reyneri 2006), but these studies lack a more dynamic perspective that could not only show us immigrants' situation in the labour market with regard to natives, but also how they are evolving in comparison with them over a certain period. In other words, we need to understand their career paths in their varying aspects, for that is the only way we'll be able to understand the outcomes of their entry: if they succeed or fail, and what the reasons may be for one outcome or the other. On the other hand, these studies and many others of those mentioned above show a certain tendency to take immigrants as an homogeneous whole separate from another homogeneous group (the natives), which means that almost any comparison in terms of occupational mobility or other job-related aspects gives results that are already known beforehand: that the situation of the immigrants is worse than that of the natives. Here we also deem it appropriate to differentiate between immigrants of diverse origins and with different characteristics, whether individual or structural.

The final step that we have aimed to take with regard to existing studies is expressed through the following hypothesis: assuming that undocumented as well as many documented immigrants are confined to lower positions in the occupational structure, something suggested by Reyneri (2006) and Miguélez; Recio (2008) when noting that the shadow economy is a strong pull factor, groups of documented immigrants<sup>2</sup> may enter the labour market with certain conditions, but such conditions may change for better or for worse with time and according to the context in which they work as well as their individual characteristics. Therefore, we propose differentiating between various groups of immigrants according to the country of origin (Peruvians, Moroccans, Romanians, Ecuadorians, the rest of the EU-15), sex, age, education level and year of arrival. We have also divided the natives in a similar way, so that we assume that immigrant status is the reason for the discrepancy with respect to the natives in certain circumstances but not others. Or perhaps this status would always appear, but gradually lose strength with respect to other factors. This strategy of analysis opens up possibilities for detecting the real integration of certain individuals.

Furthermore, using the concept of career path allows us to grasp aspects that go beyond occupational mobility, such as job stability and earnings, which bring us closer to social mobility. But if we add some structural factors (sector, company size) and individual factors (origin, sex, age, level of education) to this social mobility, we can place ourselves within the social structure. This will be the last step we take, asking about the position of the different groups in the social structure and the degree to which immigrants are present in the same.

To verify this hypothesis, we have used the Muestra Continua de Vidas Laborales (MCVL, Continuous Sample of Working Lives)<sup>3</sup>, a database created by the Spanish government using social security data that provides basic information on the career paths of immigrants in Spain compared with the natives, since it records a set of variables for each individual starting from the moment they enter the labour market. We chose the year 2007 as the end point of this path to avoid any distortion coming from the severe employment crisis that Spain has been experiencing since 2008. Nevertheless, in the conclusion we will discuss some possible hypotheses about the effects of the crisis on the career paths studied. The information provided by the MCVL gives us an excellent perspective on individuals' entry into the labour market and career paths in aspects such as days worked, type of contract, occupational categories, type of relationship with the Spanish social security system, company size, sectors of activity, changes of company, pay levels in the Spanish social security system (an indicator of income

2 The database used to develop our analysis does not show illegal immigrants. This helps to explain that the results may be more "optimistic" than if they were taken into account.

3 This is a sampling that brings together the work history of 1.2 million individuals (at least 700,000 employed), with a panel design of registries of the Spanish social security system.

level), time spent in the labour market, etc. As for personal characteristics, it provides us with information on age, sex, geographical origin by country, level of education, place of residence and workplace (López-Roldán 2011).

*The starting point: a precarious labour market undergoing great expansion*

To speak of career paths, which by definition assume the possibility of working life getting better or worse in a given period, we cannot forget the objective points of entry in the labour market, meaning the structure of production and dominant social conditions (Banyuls *et alii*, 2009). A very large proportion of the 7 million jobs created in Spain between 1995 and 2007, a period when almost 3 million immigrants obtained legal work, are labour-intensive, require low qualifications, have unstable contracts with low pay and few chances for professional promotion; labour unions for them are weak, except at large companies. This is the labour market in Spain, which differs from the average in the EU-15 (Bosch, Lehnendorf, Rubery 2009) in two specific ways: there is a greater proportion of temporary jobs and a smaller proportion of jobs requiring high qualifications. This implies a much higher degree of insecurity and uncertainty, while making it less likely to observe improvement in the various dimensions of labour market trajectories. Therefore, it is a starting point for many of those 7 million people and others who were already on the labour market before, which limits the possibilities for immigrants and natives alike to improve their career paths.

Immigrants have tended to work in sectors where this type of employment is predominant. According to the mechanisms to control flows established by Immigration Law, immigrants must take jobs that natives do not want (jobs that are demonstrably “hard to fill”). In order of importance, these are: construction, retail, health, agriculture, domestic and personal services. Certainly many have changed sectors through horizontal mobility to a greater degree than natives, but this mobility has not always translated into significant occupational mobility, since the new sectors are similar to those of the starting point in terms of working and occupational conditions, albeit perhaps better economically. Moreover, immigrants tend to start working in the smallest companies and lowest job categories.

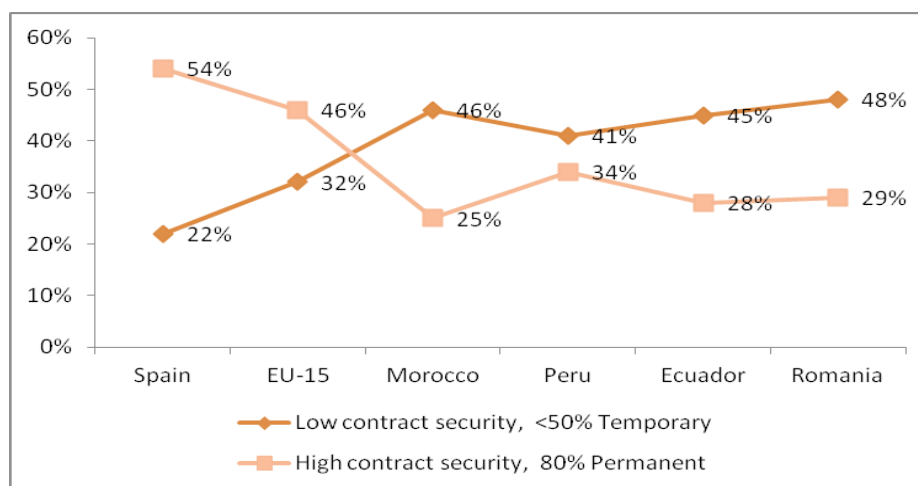
So far we have referred to aspects related to demand, meaning to the country’s structure of production. From the supply side, it is worth mentioning that employed immigrants are younger than their native counterparts, though the discrepancies are not as great as one might imagine. We also find a greater proportion of female immigrants than in the past. They have levels of education similar to those of natives and have not spent as many years on the labour market. Thus, the supply is different, but the discrepancies are not staggering.

Differences in career paths from their entry in the labour market until December 2007, could have been shorter or longer for each group considered depending on two variables: for natives, their age and initial entry into the labour market; and for immigrants, their age when they moved to Spain, if they did so legally, or when they first registered in the social security system if they entered illegally. Therefore, many people’s career path is just beginning (strictly speaking, in this case we ought not to speak about paths, since we are talking about an entry process that takes longer than it used to), while others have hit the midway point and some are even reaching the end. It is always important to keep this diversity in mind. Bearing in mind these three scenarios, when we cross tabulate data related to different aspects of working life with the time individuals have spent on the labour market or their age, we obtain a rather precise representation of their trajectories. But if other variables are taken into account (gender, education, etc.), without taking into account the two variables indicated, the representation is less exact whilst complexity increases. In any case, the idea that we have analysed and presented the trajectories of those who are working at the points of their lives they have reached today is always valid. But, as we will see below, aspects such as career advancement may come to a stop in Spain before one’s working life does. Others, such as pay, have no limit while the cycle is expansive, but may be limited during crises.

### Differentiated career paths

The three dimensions that we are going to take into account for career paths help us to create an hierarchical typology that classifies individuals' positions as well as possible movements. The research shows a *low level of contract security* in the Spanish labour market, measured in terms of contract stability. This is the first aspect of the career path because stability is key to achieve other conditions and because people aim to acquire it. The new and comprehensive variable that we have created for this research consists of analysing individuals' entire working lives from the perspective of contract security and categorising them in terms of low, average or high, according to the time they've been employed with a permanent contract: less than half, between 50% and 80% or more than 80% of the days worked from the beginning of their working life to December 2007. Even though this variable does not reflect an individual working life stability as it only captures the period of working lives completed thus far, it is nonetheless a variable that helps us to think in terms of opportunities that workers have or have had: opportunities for training, increasing their income and advancing professionally. Until reaching 34 years of age or until having spent 6 to 10 years on the labour market, instability is very high: more than half the workers have not worked more than 50% of their days with a permanent contract. Thus we can say that a very high proportion of workers have probably not undergone continuous training at a company, nor been able to advance professionally. These situations of insecurity stem directly from the type of contract one has. We can be sure of this, because there are many studies stressing the insecurity of temporary contracts with regard to these aspects (CCOO 2004). When looking at contract stability by origin, the differences stand out immediately. High levels of security throughout one's working life are mainly reserved for large groups of natives and citizens of the EU-15, followed distantly by Peruvians, Moroccans, Ecuadorians and Romanians, in that order. Graph 1 shows the percentages of employed people by country of origin that have a career path with low or high security throughout their working lives.

Graph 1. Rate of employment security by origin

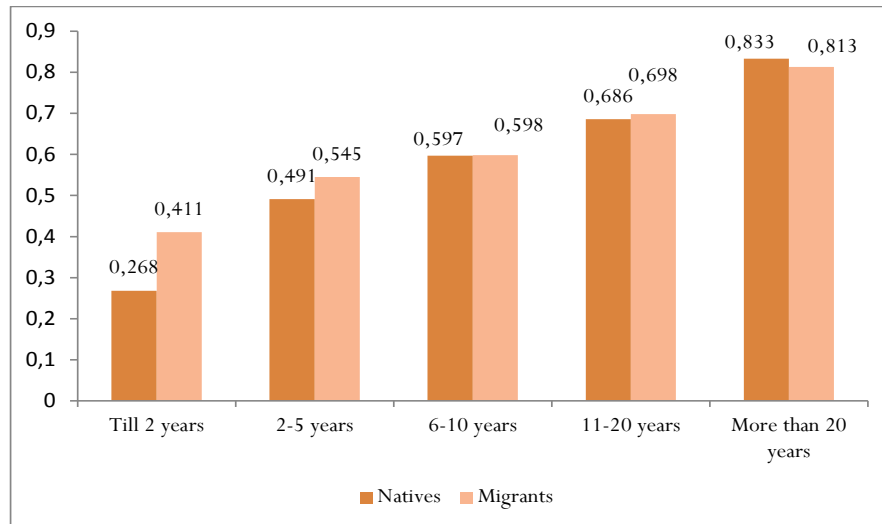


Source: Own elaboration based on MCVL (2007) data

So far, we have pursued an approach that takes account of the entire working lives of employed people, a group including immigrants who have spent only a few years or quite a few years (the latter being less) and natives who have spent only a few, quite a few or many years on the labour market. Those workers with more than 20 years in the labour market tip the balance of job security on the native side, as they have been working since before the rapid increase in temporary employment (mid-1980s) or in sectors in which external flexibility has played a less

prominent role, such as education, health, banking and transport, as reflected in graph 2. Therefore, in order to better understand the real extent of contract security, this first approach must pay attention to age and the number of years that employed people have been on the labour market, differentiating between natives and immigrants.

Graph 2. Employment security by time of permanence in the labour market



Source: Own elaboration based on MCVL (2007) data

If we adopt this perspective, we may notice facts that ought to give nuance to the rather commonly held opinion that immigrants contribute to instability much more than Spanish people. In reality, immigrants have more contractual security until they are 24 years old and less from 25 onwards. The same trend occurs in the first 6 years after legal entry in the labour market, with both groups about the same from 6 to 20 years spent on the labour market, and the balance tips towards the natives from 20 years and up. There are three factors that should be taken into account to understand what we have just stated and help us to better understand what contract security means. First, the database that we are using is that of the workers registered in the Spanish social security system, where undocumented workers do not appear; while we know that 1.2 million immigrants were given legal status in three successive amnesties (regularizations) between 2000 and 2005, those immigrants already had a work history under even more flexible and insecure conditions because it was off the books. The second factor is related to large differences between natives and immigrants with regard to contract stability in their first 6 years on the labour market and the youngest cohort; in very high proportions, natives work temporarily while they study or stay on the lookout for some kind of work more in line with their qualifications or preferences, while immigrants enter wherever they can with the aim of earning as much as possible, something which often means a stable job, even when this implies working in a sector or occupation unrelated to their qualifications and training; this difference in the first stage may give immigrants a certain “advantage” in the periods to come. Finally, it is clear that immigrants tend to search for job security in order to ensure income security more so than younger natives, since the latter may have family networks allowing them to cope with periods of unemployment whilst searching for a better job. Thus, in certain circumstances and with certain caveats, some immigrants may have greater contract security.

Immigration has brought both intersectoral and geographical mobility to the Spanish labour market, hence providing some of the flexibility that companies have traditionally demanded. At other times, immigrants have guaranteed the continuance needed in some sectors, like agriculture. See Table 1, which indicates the percentage of continuance according to sector and origin. Thus, from this point of view, the phenomenon has been functional for the production system. Another thing to note is that this mobility has not only been high, but has been able to

evade any control over working conditions, thereby increasing the shadow economy and abusive work practices, working more hours or in a higher category than established by contract, practices that are typical in construction and agriculture.

Table 1. Percentage of continuance (first contract) by sector and origin. Spain, 2007.

	NATIVES	MOROCCANS	PERUVIANS	ECUADORIANS	ROMANIANS	EU-15
Agriculture	67,5	<b>79,5</b>	66	69,9	<b>81,5</b>	78,1
Industry	68,2	60,9	43	47,4	47,6	66,2
Construction	75,6	78	73	<b>81,1</b>	<b>81,7</b>	76,9
Trade	63,4	54,4	44,6	41,7	41,8	58,3
Catering	71,9	<b>71,4</b>	63,3	63,4	63,9	<b>71,6</b>
Transport	76,6	63,5	51,5	51,2	71,5	73,6
Education	70,8	67,7	51,2	28,6	51,7	<b>81,2</b>
Banking and Insurance	57,2	36,2	46,2	25,1	23,1	52,9
Public Administration	64,3	59,9	63,2	51,2	53,7	57,2
Domestic Services	54,3	50,5	<b>43,7</b>	<b>40,2</b>	<b>29,7</b>	53,9
Health	<b>88,6</b>	82,2	80,6	62,4	66,8	<b>87</b>
Other activities	76,8	62,6	77	67,5	58,2	73,6

Source: Own elaboration based on MCVL (2007) data.

And yet beyond this phenomenon, we were also interested in studying occupational *mobility*, which may involve moving up, down or remaining stagnant in category. In this respect, the differences between natives and immigrants are quite revealing: 57% of the native employed population experiences upward occupational mobility while only 33% of the immigrant population does. Of course, most of the employed people who experience an increase in category<sup>4</sup> do so by 1 or 2 positions<sup>5</sup> (30% of the 57% indicated) and those who increase the most are in the minority, with 17% jumping by 3 or 6 positions and 7% ascending by more than 6 positions. In any case, the native population is better placed. However, the differences between natives and immigrants are switched when we look at the group of those who do not change category and those who move down, where immigrants are a majority. Immigrants take jobs with a lower social status, lower prestige and worse socioeconomic conditions, which we think can be attributed to discrimination by origin, but also to the “principle of the queue”: they arrived only recently whilst natives have been on the labour market for longer. Seniority in the labour market has a non-linear relationship with occupational mobility with three phases: the first phase, up to 6 years, is that of entry and adjustment, and generally has low mobility; between 6 and 20 years, medium and high levels of mobility are recorded; and after 20 years the dominant trend is stagnation. Similarly to other phenomena studied, immigrant volume slows down and thins out somewhat along this curve: they do arrive, but later and to a lesser extent.

But here too it is appropriate to differentiate between groups of immigrants. The best position in terms of occupational mobility is held by immigrants from the EU-15, followed by Peruvians and some groups of Moroccans, a fact that leads us to consider the existence of certain “settled” type of immigrant, according to the term used by Cachón (2009). Obviously, time is not the only factor: the level of education and the sector in which

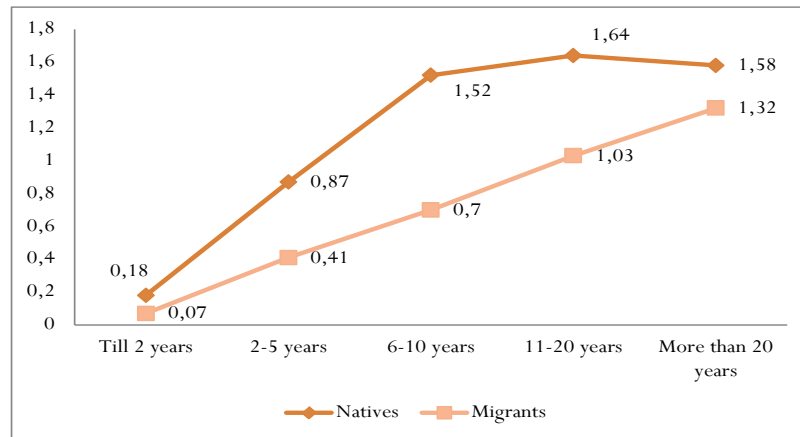
4 In this section, mobility was studied in 10 professional groups (excluding workers under 18 years of age) that make up the basis for common contingencies’ payments to the Spanish social security system.

5 The mobility indicator is constructed by counting the number of levels or positions that an individual moves up or down on a scale of 10 professional categories.



people work are also influential.

Graph 3. Job mobility by seniority in the labour market



Source: Own elaboration based on MCVL (2007) data

By using an indicator of occupational *career paths*, we aimed to go beyond simple mobility, reflecting each individual's current occupational situation as the result of a synthesis of the time prior to beginning their working life: they entered the labour market with a certain category, they moved up, down or maintained their position based on their level of education, the sector, the company size, their age and sex, and thereby reached the final point in 2007. The result of these three possibilities and the number of categories an individual moved up or down provides a balance deeply affected by the fact that many workers have not changed category. This balance allows us to identify certain types: low-level career paths (up to a balance of advancing 1 position), mid-level career paths (between 1 and 1.5 positions) and high-level career paths (more than 1.5 positions). Two important aspects must be borne in mind: the balance includes values that pull down (decrease) and zero values, stagnation values (no change); and many workers have trouble leaving a short career path even after many years due to their low qualifications.

As is the case with other aspects we have studied, age allows us to say when the career path is just beginning, when it has reached the midway point and when it is drawing to an end. We know what has happened up to that point and we try to find out why that happened, but we don't know what will happen in the future. The point reached so far will influence other aspects such as pay and other working conditions, but it may also begin to exercise influence over the future, in issues such as pension.

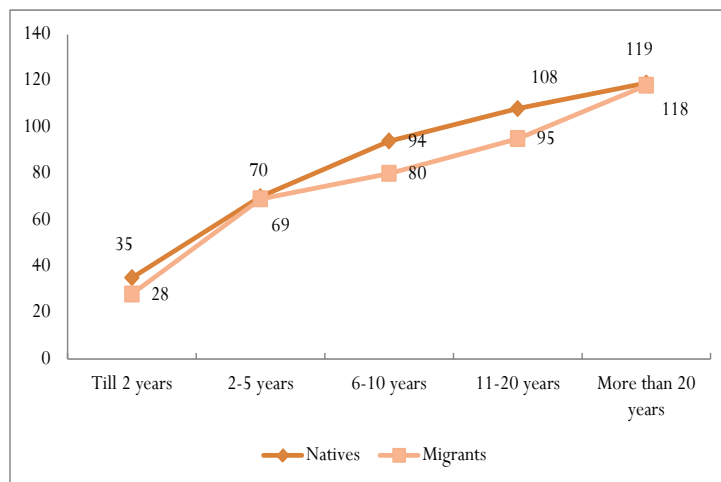
Employees with high-level career paths are found in sectors linked to public services (health and education), public administration and banking. These are also the ones that tend to occupy mainly high-level categories and have a high level of education, which presumably means that education is what opened this career path to them, clearly in sectors where that is objectively achievable. But it should be emphasised that these employees reached the highest point in their career path after 10 to 20 years on the labour market, meaning that their age is intermediate; they did not simply show up and start rising. Immigrants in this situation are few.

Employees with mid-level career paths tend to work in manufacturing industry, construction and retail. These are workers with mid-level education (occupational and secondary school training) who have been on the labour market for 6 to 10 years and rank medium or high in terms of age. There are immigrants in this group, particularly from the EU-15, Peru and Morocco. The low-level career path is occupied by those working in the health sector, domestic services and other services requiring low qualifications. These are workers who have only been on the labour market for a few years and have a low level of education. Two groups stand out by age: the very young and the rather old. We also find many immigrants here, mainly Romanians and Ecuadorians and some groups of

Peruvians.

While it is true that many immigrants arriving in Spain in the last 15 years have gone into sectors and jobs that could be rejected by natives due to their poor conditions, particularly pay, the research we conducted shows that they have not remained mired in said conditions, in closed sectors totally distinct from those of the natives.

Graph 4. Wage by seniority in the labour market (Average wage = 100)



Source: Own elaboration based on MCVL (2007) data

Though they receive more pay than natives for the first several years (for the same reasons that they have greater contract security), immigrants then drop and stay below them until the 20-year mark. After this period they tend to converge, but never fully achieve parity. This means that when they have spent 6 to 20 years on the labour market, immigrants work in worse categories than natives or are in worse sectors. After 20 years there is more convergence because many of the immigrants that have been on the labour market for so long have improved their individual and structural characteristics. But we should look closely at what happens in the period from 6 to 20 years, since there are still only a few individuals that have overcome the 20-year mark. In this period, the immigrants that can escape the inequality shown in Graph 3 include those with greater contract stability, those working in sectors that are more stable and generally better paid, those working at large companies and immigrants from the EU-15 and Peru, probably because they have accumulated more of these characteristics.

To sum up: data used in this paper shows how immigrants improve their situation in all the dimensions considered as time goes on, though some do so more than others; in other words, immigrants from some countries end up in a better position than those from other countries. This shows us that there are several factors – and three main ones – influencing this process of integration and convergence with natives' working conditions. The first is the time they have spent on the Spanish labour market, with the longest times reached by Moroccans, many from the rest of the EU-15 and some Peruvians. After this is language, in which the best situated group specifically considered here is the Peruvians. Third is the level of education and qualifications, which enable them to have a particular job, aspects in which immigrants from the EU-15 and Peruvians are better positioned than the rest. Taking these factors into account, the Moroccans are probably in the worst position of the groups indicated, even though they have spent many years on the Spanish labour market. And of course, we cannot lose sight of the fact that those coming from the EU-15 may find more open doors than the rest for this same reason. Altogether, this makes up a hierarchy of immigrant countries or regions in this order: EU-15, Peru, Morocco, Ecuador and Romania.

We must not forget that occupational upward mobility does not depend on the country but on an individual's characteristics and others due to their personal or family situation. It is clear that time gives them more chances for improving their earnings and for jumping from a low quintile to a higher one, for example, but it also allows



them to improve their occupational career path and increases their chances of having stable contracts. Yet with the passing of time, one issue continues to demand an explanation: why some immigrants close the gap with natives while others remain behind them.

If we treat immigrants as a single uniform bloc, we can do the same with the natives. Natives working in sectors of activity with high levels of immigrants (bearing in mind that there are always more natives in such sectors in absolute terms) such as construction, agriculture, health and personal services, who have low qualifications and low levels of education, also experience little occupational mobility, have short and low career paths, earn low pay and enjoy limited contract security. Perhaps they do slightly better than immigrants in similar jobs, but not markedly so.

### *The limitations of seniority on the labour market as a balancing factor*

Looking again at the different aspects that we have considered along the career paths of immigrants and natives on the Spanish labour market, it seems clear that people improve their situation in proportion to the number of years they have spent on the labour market. Over time, it seems that the assumption is strengthening that the positions of natives and immigrants would converge, which would indicate a society with decent equality of opportunities or at least one in which the stark marginalisation of the immigrant does not appear as such. However, it should be stressed that immigration is a too recent phenomenon in Spain and does not allow to draw conclusions, and those are only possible after longer periods of study. Therefore, our conclusions must merely be viewed as temporary.

Nevertheless, we cannot simply argue that “things can get better with time”. It is vital to know what determined slow or fast rhythms so that time changes things for some but not for others. To begin, it is difficult to distinguish between the impact on aspects of the career path stemming from the time spent on the labour market and the impact coming from an individual’s age, something which would help us to anticipate what negative effects may be overcome after years spent on the labour market because the person in question is young and what negative effects cannot be overcome because their age does not allow for that. Table 2 shows job security or insecurity based on age and origin. A first reading allows us to conclude that the highest age bracket has the largest proportion of people with a secure career path, meaning that life improve everyone’s situation; this also largely coincides with the number of years spent on the labour market, since this often increases with age.

A second reading could reveal that 18%-24% of those who are 35 years old or older are contractually unstable, with the assumption that they were the same way before. Thus, it is obvious that age gradually reduces people’s job instability, but slowly. In other words, a significant group of people who can no longer be considered young see their paths blocked in terms of job security and may have to cope with job insecurity their whole working lives. This appears to be many people when we consider what temporary employment means in Spain: oscillating between employment and unemployment (given the fact that temporary contracts are short) with low pay and bad working hours, little professional advancement and no chance for additional training.

*Table 2. Types of contract by age*

AGE	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	+54	Total
OPEN-ENDED CONTRACT	42,8	66,6	75,8	81,4	80,7	71,3
TEMPORARY CONTRACT	57,2	33,4	24,2	18,6	19,3	28,7

*Source: Own elaboration based on MCVL (2007) data*

The highest level of progression based on the occupational categories of the Spanish social security system

is reached by those with 10 to 20 years on the labour market, who would be 30 to 40 years old if measured in terms of age. The second-highest group in terms of progression is between 45 and 54 years old. We may take notice that people in the second group work in sectors more related to public services (public administration, education, health) and at large companies in the highest categories, while those in the first group work in the secondary sector and in services requiring lower qualifications. In any case, they see no improvement throughout their working lives. Therefore, the time they have spent on the labour market is not a factor that ends up bringing everyone closer. As we have seen above, native and immigrant income grows over time and the curves tend to come closer, but do not meet.

### *Gender differences are maintained*

Gender differences are also observed in this study and are aggravated in immigrant women with respect to men, whether immigrant or native. Different studies show how gender inequalities on the labour market take on specific sense when the origin of workers is taken into account (Cebrián et alii 2008, Reher-Requena 2009, Parella 2003). But the fact that the last few waves of immigration have seen almost equal flows of men and women indicate that we should analyse the inequalities inherent for women as a whole. Specifically, we have focused on the dimension that we have called the occupational career path, assuming that it may be key to other improvements related to pay and working conditions, but also to sector or company changes.

If we summarise the results coming out from comparing women's high-level and low-level career progress, we observe how the first have problems with vertical segregation while the second face problems of horizontal segregation. The first group is dominated by native women who work almost exclusively in sectors linked to public service and are 25 to 34 years old. In brief, these are the new active women with few family obligations (either because they don't have any or because they pay to have them fulfilled or delegate them) and a university degree. This group of native women is joined almost exclusively by two groups of immigrants: one coming from the EU-15 and the other from Peru, although the Peruvians work mostly in education and healthcare and are differentiated by having spent many years (around 20) in Spain. Next come small groups of Peruvian<sup>6</sup> and Moroccan women, characterized by having low-paying jobs. As such, immigrant women may climb high, but in addition to high levels of education they need to have been working many more years than native women, and therefore must be older than them.

Of course there are also native women at the lower level, but they tend to be older (54 years old or more) and work in sectors in which progression is objectively rare or non-existent: domestic services, agriculture, health and cleaning services. This is also where most immigrant women from all age groups that have been in Spain for less than 10 years are concentrated, with low levels of education, working in all sectors except the public sector and having low wages. Their career path reflects what Parella calls the triple discrimination due to gender, class and ethnicity (Parella 2003). As a group, both native and immigrant women (but especially the latter) have few chances to improve their labour market situation. Here we observe what some authors have started to call the "new proletariat" markedly dominated by women, in contrast with the industrial proletariat (García Noguerol 2010).

<sup>6</sup> An aspect that coincides with the specific weight of the group of Peruvians older than 55 reviewed by Sanz-Sánchez (2009), closely related to early immigration and, as such, to longer traditions. In any case, it must be remembered that this is a very small group for providing a sample.



obtain a typology (López-Roldán 1996) for the population based on eight variables: the time spent in the social security system, contributory group, pay level in 2007, level of contract security, type of contract, economic activity, company size and origin. This analysis allows us to consider a typology with five groups, as can be seen in Graphs 5 and 6, four perfectly stratified “social groups” of employees and a transition queue (group 5). Type 1 is the “group of leaders and professionals” who perform better in all dimensions: pay, progression and job stability. The subjective reasons lie in their level of education and their categories of work. The objective ones are rooted in the fact of working in large companies, robust economic sectors including the public sector, where progression is possible almost all the way to retirement; here pay grows continuously, though slightly, and stability is guaranteed for the vast majority. This is undoubtedly the strongest group on the labour market and has escaped the current crisis unscathed. Immigrants here (see Table 3) are few and far between, with the exception of those coming from the rest of the EU-15, but there are some, also from the countries studied, who trail behind across all variables. As such, some may rise to the highest point on the personal level by virtue of their birthplace, but they are few. Graph 6 shows us some of these variables of success.

Type 2 shares characteristics typical of the “middle white-collar group”: job security, mid-level pay and mid-level progression. It may take 10 or 20 years or more to achieve this, meaning intermediate and advanced ages. Structurally, type 2 people work in traditional sectors like industry, transport and retail and at medium-size companies. Individuals in this group have mid-level education and work in administrative categories. Socially they occupy intermediate positions, far below the leading groups but high above manual workers and subordinates. There are also more immigrants here, and those coming from the EU-15 close the gap with the proportion of natives, with the Peruvians being a notable minority.

Type 3 is close to what we could call the “traditional working class”, active today in construction, transport, health and manufacturing industry and in which men predominate. Their levels of success are low: mid-level security, low-level advancement (with even chances of falling) and mid-level pay. It does not seem like they have many perspectives for improvement. The objective reasons are found in the type of sector, greatly subject to cyclical crises, such as the one we are currently experiencing, and also in the company, which is often small and subject to the same problems. The subjective reasons include their level of education, which is basically primary school, and an age that can no longer be called young. Here immigrants from all origins we have studied are represented in higher proportions than natives. We could even say that it is the highest point on the scale that all immigrants can attain. However, we also see natives, immigrants from the rest of the EU-15 and Peruvians, though less significantly.

Type 4 is “the new poor working class”, dominated by women and immigrants. Their jobs are insecure (they move from temporary employment to unemployment, and vice-versa), there is no advancement but only stagnation (or even a drop) and pay is low. The explanation related to the structure of production is that they work in construction, health, retail, personal services and in small or very small companies. From the point of view of their individual characteristics, they may have a secondary education, though there are also many with only a primary education, and there are not many chances for mobility in these companies: they occupy the first manual labour scale (third-class labourers), administrative (administrative assistants) positions or work as assistant in the hotels and restaurant sector and can hardly move on from there. There are no substantial improvements on their labour market horizon.

Type 5 represents “total insecurity”, though for many this is transitory. This group is dominated by immigrants who have only been on the labour market for a few years, but there are also many young natives. It is clearly a group of transition with several leftover groups. This includes those who work as labourers and make every effort to find work in another sector or at another company, very young people whose position will improve over time, people who abandon domestic work when given the opportunity and even immigrants working in agriculture seasonally for a few months. The transitory nature is demonstrated by the fact that those dominant here spent no more than 2 years on the labour market, which explains why so many immigrants joined in 2006 and 2007.

But we should also look closer at the composition of different types with respect to their origin. The natives dominate in categories 1 and 2; almost 52% of the population is found here. On the other hand, only a few are in group 5. If we consider the proportion of non-EU immigrants found in this group and the one immediately

above it, we may assume that the immigrants' arrival has contributed notably to a certain "social upgrading" among the natives. The immigrants from the rest of the EU-15 are worthy of mention twice: more than 35% are in groups 1 and 2 and almost as many are in group 4. Though organised by different positions in the stratification, this duality is seen in all immigrant groups of different origins: the Moroccans are in groups 5 and 4; the Peruvians in groups 4 and 5 (though in a better position than the Ecuadorians); the Ecuadorians in groups 4 and 5; and the Romanians in groups 5 and 4. Thus, an individual's chances of becoming one or another of the 5 types, which could be modern versions of social groups based on origin, would give us the following hierarchy: natives, immigrants from the rest of the EU-15, Peruvians, Ecuadorians, Moroccans and Romanians.

Table 3. Population distribution by origin and type

	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4	Type 5	Total
NATIVES	22,3%	29,5%	19,9%	20,7%	7,6%	100,0%
MOROCCANS	2,8%	6,3%	22,4%	32,9%	35,6%	100,0%
PERUVIANS	4,0%	14,6%	18,2%	41,6%	21,6%	100,0%
ECUADORIANS	0,8%	7,7%	24,1%	39,0%	28,3%	100,0%
ROMANIANS	0,4%	4,3%	23,1%	35,3%	36,9%	100,0%
REST OF EU-15	15,0%	23,1%	18,2%	32,4%	11,3%	100,0%

Source: Own elaboration based on MCVL (2007) data.

Within Spain, we observe differences indicating the existence of regionally differentiated labour markets. Distinguishing between Catalonia, Madrid and the rest of Spain (Table 4), we see that there are opportunities for immigrants to break into groups 1 and 2 in the first two regions, probably because there is more work available at large companies, in public administration and public services. Subjectively, these are immigrants with higher levels of education and more time on the labour market. But groups 4 and 5 are also found in greater proportions in the aforementioned regions, meaning that their labour markets are more segmented.

Table 4. Presence of immigrants of various types, according to region of residence in Spain, 2007.

	CATALONIA	MADRID	REST OF SPAIN
TYPE 1	Immigration: 4.24	Immigration: 5.51	Immigration: 2.51
TYPE 2	Immigration: 7.1 (Morocco)	Immigration: 9.30 (Peru)	Immigration: 4.01 (rest of world)
TYPE 3	Immigration: 18.9 (Morocco, rest of EU-15)	Immigration: 25.40 (Ecuador, rest of EU-15)	Immigration: 10.19
TYPE 4	Immigration: 31.47 (rest of world, rest of EU-15)	Immigration: 35.07 (rest of world, rest of EU-15)	Immigration: 16.46
TYPE 5	Immigration: 54.50 (Morocco, rest of world)	Immigration: 59.43 (rest of world, Ecuador)	Immigration: 29.02 (rest of world)

Source: Own elaboration based on MCVL (2007) data.

*Conclusion: looking to the future*

Crises often show just how real equality of opportunities really is, and we can see this in the current crisis as well. Those who have fallen into unemployment, which have a long duration, have been the weakest workers in the weakest sectors, and significant among them have been immigrants and young natives<sup>1</sup>. Of the 5 million unemployed people in Spain at the end of 2011, 1.3 million, or 25%, were immigrants. In percentages, while natives were at 20.4%, immigrants stood at 34.8%<sup>2</sup>.

The first impact of this crisis is the decline of immigrant inflows, which dropped in 2009 and were negative in 2011, with more people leaving than entering. Some research, as well as a comparison of data from the Labour Survey (EPA) and registers of the Spanish government's social security system, would support the growth of undocumented immigration, which entails a further worsening of the conditions we have studied. This is a frequent consequence of all crises.

Unemployed people share three main features: they are workers in certain sectors (construction), with temporary contracts and low qualifications. This determines there are many young people (natives in greater proportions), men (more significant among immigrants) and people with low levels of education (also immigrants) and means that the crisis may seriously slow down immigrants' social mobility. But if we soon return to some kind of "normal situation", the following factors may be the most important in maintaining the changes we have studied. First, the level of education may have less influence on immigrants' advancement than on natives', without forgetting that for many of the latter, their studies have little relevance to their work. On the contrary, the sector or type of company in which they work ends up being more determinative. What this means is that perhaps a greater amount of "brain waste" is observed among immigrants than among natives and this should be taken into account when giving guidance to immigrants who are currently unemployed and will have trouble finding the types of work that they lost: more training and degree and experience recognition may be useful for the future. In many cases, training them for new jobs also means making them acquire basic language skills. We should also increase actions to welcome and integrate these people, aimed at convincing them that the shadow economy is not the way forward for them. But everything indicates that the crisis will be long.

<sup>1</sup> The unemployment rate for people younger than 25 reached 50% at the end of 2011. The emigration of these people is already taking on alarming proportions.

<sup>2</sup> Data from the Workforce Survey (EPA), Q4 2011.



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